

# Legislature Makes Devastating Cuts - Reverses Smart Start Progress

*The House Majority has reversed progress for Alaskan children by making devastating cuts to existing child protection services and rejecting modest investments to ensure health, safety and success for children.*

What the Governor's Budget Proposes:	What the House Majority Budget Does:
<i>Modest investments to continue the dramatic improvement in child well-being in Alaska.</i>	<i>Zero state general funds to continue the progress of Smart Start, and drastic cuts to troopers and front line child protection workers who keep Alaska's vulnerable children safe every day.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Fight inhalant abuse and provide alcohol treatment</b> for women with children and teens. A study by the McDowell Group indicates that Alaska's alcohol problem costs \$453 million per year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Zero state general funding for the Governor's alcohol initiative.</b> Waitlists will continue to grow for treatment, the Juvenile ASAP program will continue to be overloaded.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>5 new Troopers for Fairbanks, Palmer, and Soldotna</b> to respond to high priority child abuse and sexual assault cases within 24 hours. Modest investments to respond to more reports of abuse and work to reunite broken families.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Zero additional troopers to investigate reports of harm.</b> Cuts 23 existing troopers or other key law enforcement personnel and 32 front line child protection workers. Eliminates successful program in Mat-Su that investigates reports of harm. Reverses progress responding to reports of harm more quickly when children are in danger.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Juvenile probation officers for Anchorage, Barrow, Dillingham, Homer, Kenai, Kodiak and Valdez</b> to monitor and rehabilitate children who commit crimes. The average probation officer's caseload is 31 even though the recommended caseload is 12.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Zero funding for the juvenile probation officers.</b> Partially closes a youth detention facility which will increase the overcrowding at other facilities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continued funding for the Balloon Project</b> that has helped 1,200 children stuck in foster care get adopted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Zero help for children in foster care waiting to be adopted.</b> Cuts the existing 14 social workers and lawyers who help speed up adoptions for children. Long-term negative consequences for public safety, as children who linger too long in temporary care are more likely to end up in trouble.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Fair pay for hard working foster parents</b> who earn just \$22.34 per day, a rate based on the 1993 federal poverty guidelines. In a March 2001 survey by the University of Alaska Anchorage, foster parents said that the current stipend is inadequate to meet the basic needs of a foster child. The Governor proposes a \$25.36 per day rate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>No increase in pay for foster parents.</b> This increases the difficulty of recruiting and retaining foster parents who are critical to protecting children who aren't safe in their own homes.</li> </ul>

## How to Get Involved

### Contact Your Legislator

**Phone:** Call your local LIO  
**Email:** Representative\_Firstname\_Lastname@legis.state.ak.us  
 Senator\_Firstname\_Lastname@legis.state.ak.us

### Details on the Cuts

For details on proposed cuts for each department, visit the Office of Management and Budget web site: [www.gov.state.ak.us/omb](http://www.gov.state.ak.us/omb)



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